by the State Government. ICAR provides grant in aid only for the established state agriculture universities to strengthen educational programmes.

To take care of the Transfer of Technology, ICAR has already established one KVK during 1994-95 at Arunachal Silchar, Cachar district of Assam under Assam Agricultural University.

Assam Agricultural University has the defined mandate for the whole state and expertise available with it, is adequate to take care of research, education and extension education for the State.

Waiting List for LPG

*122. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who are in the waiting list for LPG in metropolitan cities of the country and in North-Eastern regions as on 31st December, 1998; and

(b) what measures are proposed to be taken by Government to clear the waiting list?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) The following number of persons were in the waiting list for LPG in the metropolitan cities of the country and in North-Eastern region as on 1.1.99:—

STATES	(Figs. in Lakhs) WAITING LIST
DELHI	7.34
MUMBAI	2.48
CALCUTTA	5.01
CHENNAI	4.28
NORTH EAST STATES	2.94

(b) The Government has released a high enrolment of 41.4 lakhs LPG new connections during 1997-98 and 39.5 lakhs during 1998-99 for the whole Country. During current year 1998-99,

- 3 lakh additional new connections have been given for clearing the waiting list in Delhi over and above the normal release under the above enrolment plan against the surrender of the quantity of kerosene being distributed to 3 lakh families. The maturity of actual release is around 60%. This has reduced the demand in Delhi greatly.
- 1.5 lakhs additional connections have been released for clearing the waiting list of Union Terriroties, North East, J&K and H.P. Oil Companies have been asked to liquidate the entire waiting list of these areas.

For the other Metro Cities, the waiting list is being cleared in line with the existing policy of release of connections to distributorships at different levels of viability.

Plans have been drawn for higher availability of LPG by increasing the capacity of the existing production sources, putting up new plants and higher import through existing and new facilities, with the expected higher availability of LPG through imports and indigenous production, high number of connections are planned to be released in future and it is expected to clear the entire waiting list in the country by the year 2000-2001 A.D.

Restoration of Commuted Value of Pension to Central Government Employees

*123. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Fifth Central Pay Commission has recommended restoration of the Commuted pension of the Central

Government pensioners after twelve years instead of fifteen years;

(b) if so, whether this was accepted;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and whether Government would review this decision to give relief to the pensioners in 1999 which is being observed as the Year of Senior Citizens; and

(d) if so, by when the orders are likely to be issued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The recommendation of the Pay Commission relating to restoration of commuted portion of pension after 12 years was not accepted by the Government. In view of a large number of representations received in this context, the matter is being examined having regard to all the relevant factors.

LPG Distributorship in Himachal Pradesh

*124. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some proposals to set up 22 LPG distributorships in Himachal Pradesh are pending with the Ministry since March, 1995.

(b) whether some more proposals to set up 15 LPG distributorships in Himachal Pradesh are also pending with the Ministry since July, 1997;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to take some action on these proposals; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) to (e) Requests are received from time to time from different States of the country including Himachal Pradesh for setting up more LPG distributorships. The locations found economically viable and feasible are included in the marketing Plan for selection of LPG distributors through prescribed selection procedure. In Himachal Pradesh, for eco-fragile areas, Government has been allotting LPG distributorship and extension points direct to the Himachal Pradesh State Civil Supplies Corporation. Of the 37 locations recommended by Government of Himachal Pradesh, one location Kilar, Distt. Chamba has reportedly no motorable road and therefore, not feasible. All other locations are already having either extension points or are covered under the area of operation of the existing LPG distributorship and therefore, getting LPG supply. Of these, after survey, 15 locations have been found feasible and included in the Marketing Plans for independent distributorships to be allotted to individuals and others as per Government policy. The details of all locations are given in the enclosed statement (*See* below). Some of the 15 locations for independent distributorships have already been advertised and selection process for appointment of distributors is in progress.